

## The Washington Times

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SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 1914.

### PREPARING FOR SUMMER.

Let us bear in mind that one of the prime objects of a spring clean-up is to eliminate the fly and the mosquito. When we are exercising our muscles and our ingenuity ridding our dwellings and neighborhoods of dust and filth, it will be worth our while to give these twin winged pests serious attention.

The first spring fly, of course, came some time ago, though she is still pleasantly modest and retiring. It is not reassuring, however, to reflect that the little insect is keeping carefully out of our sight and the reach of our swatters while she lays a few myriads of eggs, which presently will hatch out into a whole flying regiment of nuisances and disease carriers.

The shy and unobtrusive mosquito is making the best use of her time for the same purpose. When the open season on human beings arrives she hopes to have a whole army corps of her progeny to lead to the attack.

Now is the time to get busy if we want to preserve ourselves from the pests a few months hence. The swatter and the kerosene can are fully as important household implements at this season as the broom and the scrubbing brush.

### INVENTING WAR NEWS.

The circumstances in which the campaign in Mexico must be conducted, lend themselves especially to the business of manufacturing war news for political and diplomatic purposes. The long frontier between the United States and Mexico is lined by enterprising correspondents who have had long experience in making news mountains out of fact molehills. Moreover, the correspondents, if they were never too desirous of maintaining a conservative attitude toward affairs, could not protect themselves and their public against manufactured and bogus information. When the Huerta people in Mexico City put out such stories as that federal forces have crossed the Rio Grande and taken Brownsville, Tex., it is all right for Americans to smile amusedly; but that preposterous yarn gets cabled to a leading London newspaper and taken more or less seriously, for a few hours at least.

Two days ago somebody in Washington started the story that a battleship of our fleet at Vera Cruz had been blown up by the Maine was at Havana. The story was traceable to no source; it was not taken seriously by people in touch with responsible sources of information. Yet, because it started in Washington, it was sent all over the country as one of the unconfirmed reports, which might or might not later prove true; but which was perfectly certain, meantime, to increase the restiveness of the public.

The manufacture and circulation of false reports, with deliberate purpose of affecting the public mind or the international situation, might well be given some official attention. Well-intentioned newspapers that want to give the news and all the news have the keenest concern in behalf of guarantees that liars shall be discouraged.

### HEALTH OF OUR SOLDIERS.

There will be no repetition in the Mexican campaign of those criminal stupidities that transformed the camps of our soldiers in the Spanish-American war into field hospitals, where disease stalked almost unchallenged and death exacted a more frightful toll than the enemy's arms. In that school of dreadful experience and in Cuba, the Philippines, and Panama we learned something of how to combat the real scourge of tropical warfare.

Our army medical corps, if reports speak the truth, has become one of the most efficient in the world. Its campaigns are laid out in advance with the same attention to detail and the same provision for emergencies that mark the plans of the general staff for the active conduct of offensive operations. In the medical reserve are commissioned physicians and surgeons of standing in almost every city in the country. These men are liable to be called on for duty. The old scandal, which committed the health and the lives of brave soldiers to the careless ignorance of callow incompetents, will not be repeated. Last year, among all the Federal troops in camp in Texas, there was not one case of typhoid.

This is but a symptom of our general preparedness that has been exemplified in the promptness with which the army and navy have re-

sponded to the call of their country and the efficiency with which the navy's landing parties have done their day's work. It is a symptom of the highest moment, however, for all modern wars have exemplified the prime importance of wisely adequate medical direction. The medical corps, which certainly did not shine in 1898, will have opportunity for vindication.

### MEDIATION IN MEXICO.

There is nothing in any of the official expressions concerning the project of Latin-American mediation in Mexico to afford ground for high hopes of important results. Certainly there is nothing more hopeful in the public's view of this newest development. In brief, it is proposed that three powers that have not recognized Huerta shall mediate in a matter involving Huerta, his enemies at home, and another power that has not recognized him! A greater diplomatic incongruity could hardly be imagined.

The possibility—and it is a probability rather than a possibility—that before mediation has been started the United States will have further to employ force in Mexico, is duly noted in the State Department's acceptance of the mediation offer. More than that, it is as plain as anything can be that this Government can accept nothing short of a decision that eliminates Huerta, and that Huerta will enter no arrangement in which that is a sine qua non. It appears then that we have merely provided Huerta with another opportunity to flout this Government.

It is of the essence of mediation, that, if it is successful, some measure of advantage shall accrue to all parties concerned. That essential is absent from any possible result in this case; there can be no advantage to Huerta; and Huerta being assured of this in advance, it is not to be thought that he will take chances on the proceeding. At the same time, being an ungoverned and ungovernable outlaw in the realm of international relations, every opportunity of complicating conditions is to his advantage. The newest development seems sure to provide one more opportunity quite to his liking.

Is there reason to hope that Carranza can take a more friendly view of mediation than does Huerta? Mediation's best outcome being in the nature of compromise, can the Carranza party compromise? Will it not prefer to go ahead and take its chances? A compromise would have to mean something like the ad interim presidency of de la Barra, at the close of the Madero revolution, and the constitutionalists will be indisposed to risk another experience like that. The Madero regime was undermined while de la Barra was Provisional President, and the Carranzista-Villa people know it. They know that another ad interim regime, initiated by a compromise now, would almost certainly produce that same result again. It would destroy the fruits of the present revolution; and so on indefinitely. There is no room for compromise, and it is impossible to see how mediation can possibly bring results. It is far more likely to bring delays and complexities, enmeshing the situation in greater difficulties than ever.

### INSURING SCHOOLBUILDINGS.

Following the burning of the Western High School building, the fact developed that the District does not insure its public buildings. In fact, there is a law of Congress—and a sensible and proper one it is—prohibiting their insurance. But some people have taken a mistaken and narrow view, and assumed that it is a mistake to leave such property uninsured. Perhaps it is worth while, then, to explain why public property almost always goes uninsured, and why it should.

A man has a hardware store worth \$20,000. It is his entire capital. He wants to borrow money at the bank. The banker, knowing the property is good security and the man honest, asks about insurance. No, the property is not insured. It must be insured before the merchant's credit is made good. The business man must insure to protect his credit, and also to protect himself against utter disaster in case of fire. The home owner, the farmer, everybody else, must insure for like reasons; nobody can afford to take the risk of "carrying" his own insurance.

Insurance is a thoroughly socialistic arrangement by which the property of the community as a whole stands behind each individual and is pledged to make good the individual's loss. In the case of a great fire insurance company, the "community" of mutual guarantors are the policy-holders and premium-payers of the concern. In the case of the District of Columbia, the policy-holders are the people of the

District; those who pay the taxes, own the property, and are responsible.

The District, in short, is a highly organized co-operative scheme. It is richer than any insurance company; it is just as able to "carry" its own insurance as any corporation could possibly be. If a school house burns, the District is able to rebuild it, because all the people are part of the co-operative insurance arrangement, and the burden is distributed to all of them.

But it is not merely the fact that the District's own community wealth is better guarantee of security than the assets of any insurance company. That is only one detail. In the United States as a whole, the cost of managing fire insurance is so great that the public has to pay many millions annually, in premiums, in excess of the returns it receives on losses.

Therefore, it is a waste to insure public property. The best security in the world is behind public property—the Government and the taxing power. The taxpayer must pay the premiums, if his property is insured; why should he not prefer to pay the losses direct, which he is perfectly able to do, and save the difference between the premiums and the indemnity?

States, cities, the nation generally, do not insure their property, and this is the reason. The District of Columbia does not for the same reason. There is no possible reason why they should carry insurance, and every reason of sound business why they should not.

### SPREAD OF CO-OPERATION.

The growth of co-operative business enterprise in Kansas has been attracting much attention recently. Not many years ago, efforts at co-operation in buying and marketing merchandise were looked upon as impractical proposals of the populist imagination; nowadays the Government is straining every effort to encourage and increase such methods. Kansas was one of the earliest communities to go in for such methods, and therefore has given one of the best demonstrations of results.

Some of the co-operative stores are a quarter-century old, but in the last two or three years there has been a great spread of the system. It is said that in that period the number of people in the State served by these establishments has increased from 12,000 to half a million. Among the mercantile establishments, now numbering over 100, many have substantial monopoly of the trade in their regions, including dry goods, boots and shoes, and clothing, along with groceries and hardware. The grain-handling business of the State is fast being taken over by these concerns. Almost 200 charters for farmers' co-operative elevator companies have been issued within the last half-year. Mutual telephone lines pioneered the way to the wide range of enterprises now handled in this way. In the early years the farming communities and small towns could get no telephone service save by providing it themselves, and this they did. Now every county has its mutual telephone business, and most of them have also their county mutual insurance concerns, which handle a large share of the farm fire insurance at very low rates and to the excellent satisfaction of the people. The co-operative concerns are fast reaching out to a wider range of activities in marketing farm produce, undertaking, and to a remarkable extent accomplishing, in some localities, the elimination of the middlemen.

Watches White House Gardens. Mrs. Wilson also takes a deep interest in the White House gardens, which never have been more beautiful than this spring. Mrs. Taft, the former occupant of the White House, was interested in gardening and much of the planning of the Speedway was done under her direction. Mrs. Marshall, wife of the Vice President, is another woman who would "rather garden than anything else." When Mrs. Marshall lived in Indiana her garden was one of the show places of the State. She spent the best part of every morning and many an afternoon digging in it. In fact, not until an attack of rheumatism was brought on from weeding during a damp rainy spell, did Mrs. Marshall give up the actual labor of gardening. Or all flowers, Mrs. Marshall would rather grow poppies and old-fashioned cornflowers. She loves the poppies and cornflowers. Her garden was so arranged that the early

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### CODFISH BY THE YARD.

Every once in a while some community is startled to discover how prevalent dishonesty is among dealers in foodstuffs. A few years ago an investigation started by Chicago women set out to find how many scales and measures were crooked. It was not long before it began to look as if the hunt were to find some honest scales and measures.

Philadelphia has had an operabouffe episode of fishmongers selling shad and herring and mackerel, codfish, and eels and flounders at so much a foot, and figuring prices for their customers with the aid of a yardstick.

Yardstick measure had to be resorted to after the inspectors of weights and measures had raided a curb market. The dealers adopted that odd but legal expedient after the inspectors had taken nearly all the scales and weights in the market. Out of 600 implements for weighing and measuring inspected only about a dozen were found to be correct. False bottoms in measures, cast-iron weights scooped out underneath, automatic scales that had been "doctored" were confiscated on every side.

Being on the job all the time and with vigilance seems to be the only way for officials to stop such practices. In communities where it is sure that there is such watchful care there is probably very little actual cheating; where there is less or no care there is probably a good deal of raw swindling.

# Flower Gardens, Tended With Own Hands, Are Pride of Women in Capital's Society Set

MRS. JOHN W. KERN.

MRS. WOODROW WILSON.

MRS. CLAUDE A. SWANSON.



Mrs. Wilson, Famed for Japanese Iris Bed at Princeton, Takes Deep Interest in White House Flowers.

By MARY EDNA NOYES.

At this particular season of the year it has been said that a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love. Be that as it may, one would not dare to say aught to the contrary; but one thing is certain that a woman's fancy turns to thoughts of her garden. At least, Washington society women—both old and young—are now more concerned with plans for rose gardens, iris beds, poppy plants, and the like, than in affairs of court.

Those who are not working in and planning for their gardens in Washington are arranging to make a speedy departure for their various country places and summer homes in order that their beloved gardens will not suffer for attention. Beginning with the First Lady of the Land, Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, and going through the various circles of Washington society, we find a number of well-known women who are expert gardeners. They do not like to make plans for all the year, but they like to do a great big apron, gloves, and a sun bonnet and get down upon their knees close to mother earth and dig, and plant and weed their own gardens.

Mrs. Wilson is considered a very expert landscape gardener. The Princeton home of the President and Mrs. Wilson is famous for the beautiful garden, which was laid out and planned by Mrs. Wilson. The bed of Japanese iris, pictures of which probably have gone from one end of the country to the other, is the result of years of work on the part of Mrs. Wilson. She sent to Japan for the bulbs, and spent many seasons experimenting to get the desired shades. The flowers are arranged so that they shade from deepest purple to palest mauve and to white.

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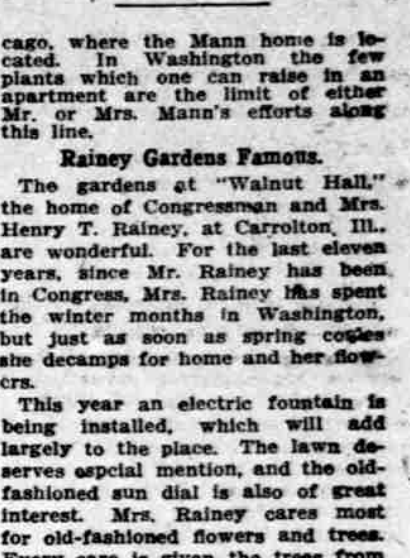
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- "THE RECOVERY OF WASTE"—H. H. Seldomridge, Westminster Memorial Presbyterian Church, Seventh street southwest, 7:45 p. m.
- "OTHERS"—The Rev. Dr. James T. Marshall, West Street Presbyterian Church, Thirty-first and P streets northwest, 8 p. m.
- "SOLDIERS' SHOES"—The Rev. J. J. Muir, Temple Baptist Church, Tenth and N streets north west, 7:45 p. m.
- "CONVENIENT SEASONS"—The Rev. W. F. Johnson, Grace Baptist Church, Ninth and D streets southeast, 7:45 p. m.
- "WHEN FATHER IS KING IN HIS HOME"—The Rev. John Compson Ball, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Sixth and A streets northeast, 7:45 p. m.
- "A WASHINGTON LOVE STORY THAT WENT WEST"—The Rev. E. H. Swam, Centennial Baptist Church, Eighth and I streets northeast, 8 p. m.
- "THE AMERICAN HOME"—The Rev. B. D. Gaw, West Washington Baptist Church, Thirty-first and N streets northwest, 7:45 p. m.
- "MODERN METHODS IN TEMPERANCE REFORM"—Jesse C. Suter, Universalist Church of Our Father, Thirtieth and L streets northwest, 8 p. m.

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